



C. WILLIAM O'NEILL

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Dedication

To

C. William O'Neill

The passage of time will not dim the light of C. William O'Neill. He was that rare, courageous, brilliant leader who had a zest for reason, a hunger for goodness and a passion for wisdom. He loved life and he loved to be with people, for he possessed a rich capacity for living. Those of us who were privileged to know him and particularly to have worked with him, recognized and admired the sheer massiveness of this man—the monumental quality of his life and his impressive dedication to the law, as a legislator, governor, jurist and teacher—ever a lawyer.

Throughout his career, in whatever capacity he served, he opposed those things he believed to be wrong and set himself busy in correcting them. He had confidence in the ultimate triumph of truth over error, provided that truth had full opportunity to be heard.

Commencing with his membership into the General Assembly at age twenty-two and continuing through his singularly distinguished public service as head of all three branches of Ohio government, he dedicated his life to bettering the life of all Ohioans. He never rested from his service to the people.

"Bill" O'Neill was acclaimed by leaders of federal and state government. Professional colleagues and people everywhere welcomed him warmly wherever and whenever he appeared, and his appearances throughout Ohio and the country, for a multitude of causes, were many. He was recognized as one who stood four-square for all that mankind held sacred, for freedom and tolerance, for inalienable human rights, for pity and for justice. He hated sham, pomp, and privilege.

Every matter that was presented for his consideration, whether it was a note from an elementary school child seeking information about the court system or a brief submitted for judicial determination, he gave his undivided energy. He listened with eagerness to learn the truth and his searching questions sought information and understanding, from which he reasoned with clarity and fairness. He gave dignity to human life by the way he lived and expressed himself in all seasons.

Upon assuming the responsibilities of the Chief Justice of The Supreme Court of Ohio, he gave unstintingly of his time and efforts, utilizing the high qualities of his leadership to effect the mandate of the Modern Court Constitutional Amendment. Under his leadership, more changes for the improvement in the administration of justice in Ohio were

made than in all the prior legal history of Ohio. In every rule and procedure that was considered, study and analysis was given by him and each member of the Court who served with him. He advocated unpopular but much needed reform and even those who disagreed with him respected his courage, wisdom and soundness of reason. He gave everything he did a moral dimension.

He is gone, but his deeds will stay forever. Those whose lives were touched by this great man are grateful that such a man as C. William O'Neill lived and moved among us, and inspired us at all times. We are grateful that we were privileged to know a man whose vision was clear, whose faith was doubtless, whose idealism was steadfast, and whose belief in protecting the constitutional rights of the individual was as immovable as a rock.

The legal profession and all citizens are grateful to Almighty God for having given us C. William O'Neill.

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